

"Go deep enough there is music everywhere."—*Carlyle.*

# The Minim,

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MISS ROSALIND F. ELЛИCOTT.

*From a Photograph by Messrs. Elliott & Fry.*

## MISS ROSALIND F. ELLICOTT.

This amiable and gifted lady (the daughter of the Bishop of Gloucester), whose portrait we give in this month's issue, is well known—not only in her own locality, but throughout musical circles—as a clever composer, singer and pianoforte-player. Like all eminent musicians, her musical talent showed itself at very early age, and after the usual preliminary training and few years' study at the Royal Academy, Miss Ellicott composed a quartett for piano and strings, which was played at a concert given by Mr. A. Burnett, the violinist, at Steinway Hall. Subsequently, on the advice of several friends in the musical profession, she gave special attention to composition, studying under the late Mr. Thomas Wingham, who at once set her to work on advanced form and orchestration. Rapid progress was made under his admirable teaching, and in 1886 the "Dramatic" overture was performed with much success at the Gloucester Festival (this work has since been played on many occasions, the principal being a Saturday Crystal Palace Concert in 1891, at Chicago Exhibition in 1893, and at Cheltenham Festival, also in 1893). In 1887 a work for chorus and orchestra, "Radiant Sister of the Day," was performed at Cheltenham Festival, and in 1889 the first cantata, "Elysium,"

was performed at the Gloucester Festival. In 1890 the Bristol Madrigal Society gave her part-song, "Bring the Bright Garlands," and in the same year she was elected a member of the Incorporated Society of Musicians. In 1892 the cantata, "The Birth of Song," was performed at the Gloucester Festival, and Miss Ellicott is now engaged on a work for piano and orchestra for this year's Gloucester Festival. In 1894 a work she had been commissioned to write for Queen's College, Oxford, was performed there at the annual concert. It was a setting of Macaulay's ballad, "Henry of Navarre," for male voices and orchestra.

Besides choral and orchestral works Miss Ellicott has written a good deal of chamber music, played at the Musical Artists' Society and other London concerts. The most important chamber composition is a Trio in D minor for piano and strings, which is much admired by Signor Piatti, who has already played in it three times in private. Miss Ellicott also studied singing, and has sung a good deal in public and private for some years. Her principal teacher has been Miss Hilda Wilson, a Gloucestershire lady herself, whose admirable method produced in a large measure Miss Ellicott's excellent soprano.

## NOTES UPON NOTES

By W. H. HOLMES.

Touch—as applied to the pianoforte—what is it? You see a pianoforte before you with a row of keys; yet how differently will that same row of keys sound under different fingers. I don't mean those who naturally lay violent hands on any instrument—matured key-thumpers—or those with the boarding-school bang or the drawing-room tinkle, but those who would squeeze the ivories and press the ebonies, remembering that all playing must be from the finger and wrist, not from shoulder and fist; in fact, believing that touch is a mechanical power obeying the impulse of the mind, the mental and physical both requiring culture. It was my good fortune when a small boy to hear Carl Maria von Weber, the last time I believe that he ever touched the pianoforte, in accompanying the Dowager Countess of Essex (then Miss Stephens), in a *scena*, "From Chindra's warbling Fount I come" (*Lalla Rookh*), composed expressly for his benefit concert. Although ill, and in almost a dying state (he fainted after the concert), yet you could not but feel that you heard the touch of a gifted

musician—so delicate, so soft and yet so rich in quality of tone, and showing the command which the composer of the *Concertstück* had over his instrument. I also remember, when playing to J. B. Cramer, hearing him *touch* the pianoforte—the silvery, glassy tone ringing in one's ears, the "volume" of sweet tone, the tenderness of the powerful man, the wonderfully suppressed force. J. B. Cramer had a large hand, enabling him to play most extended passages with great sweetness.

Mendelssohn was a *wonderful player* of genius, with an energy that seemed to sweep down everything before it. In some things one might, I fancy, trace the organ player in the touch on the pianoforte (no disparagement though to his pianoforte playing). He seemed thoroughly to enjoy playing, and literally rolled about in his seat—not affectedly, but, "being moved by the music," played as he did so marvellously. Our own Sir Sterndale Bennett—what originality of thought in his touch! Music was never overstrained with him—always free from exaggeration. Then



Cipriani Potter, how elegant, how graceful, and how original his touch, and what a *master*! What a method he had of imparting all that could be learnt with regard to touch. Thalberg, the "Lion Pianist" as he was called, what power and what delivery! and yet so quiet in position at the pianoforte. And, lastly, at this time, our queen of pianists, Madame Arabella Goddard — what roundness of tone! Then, again, in her marvellous piano passages (akin to the celebrated whispering of Macready) so distinctly heard in every part of the largest concert rooms—a touch that can assimilate with other instruments so wonderfully. In taking a *part*, accompanying or being accompanied, Madame Arabella Goddard's graceful, lady-like, and quiet position at the pianoforte is proverbial. Has not this much to do with the real command she possesses over tone, and her unerring certainty of execution?

I think I have said enough to show the variety there is in touch, almost as much variety as in human countenances. Difference of countenance ought, of course, to be the index of different souls; so also should touch be an indication of the mind within.

In educating or forming the touch, it has often been a vexed question whether technical studies should not be the sole means. I cannot but

think that *music* should never be lost sight of; and it has always been my fear that too severe a course of technics (alone) would dissipate all musical feeling; in fact, I have witnessed sad examples of the kind. The great Bach speaks of players whose playing sounds as if their fingers were all thumbs. Are there not a few of their descendants on this day covering notes in chords without sounding them; never aiming at position, or trying, when playing, to carry a glass of water on the hand without spilling it? Believing that the soul of music is in the foot of the pedal—the intoxicating medium, the inebriety of the pianoforte—forgetting even the name of the instrument, *pianoforte*, attending to unfortunate accidental accidentals, steeplechasing over the instrument, and leaping over bars—showing that although "time waits for no man" these players will not wait for time. They have a hammer-and-tongs style of pommelling out the tone of the instrument, or tinkling on the pianoforte with *nails*, their fingers appearing to be in pattens. Then come in the very mysterious *fortes* and *pianos*, when it might be necessary for the player to say "Now I am playing *piano*," "Now I am playing *forte*," then making a discovery of lost practice, if there was any practice at all.

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THOMAS CARLYLE.

First as to what this article is not. It is not an attempt to explain or interpret Carlyle's works; and it most certainly is not a miniature complete edition of them, boiled down and concentrated into an essence of two columns. For those who care anything for them there are the works themselves, and they will be satisfied with nothing less; a simplified Carlyle were an absurdity. But, further, this is not even a life of the man Thomas. Such a biography would either have to be so intensely strong that it would become poison and kill, or so weak, so diluted, so homoeopathic, that a hundred doses of it would be resultless. So much for a negative explanation; a positive one is more difficult. Perhaps "a rough-and-ready record of impressions" comes nearest the mark.

If I were asked to define originality, by which I mean originality in literature, I should answer in a word—Carlyle. There is originality concreted. So much I do not think any—even the Carlyle scoffer—will venture to deny. Originality in its own proper meaning does not imply worth at all. If you can do any one thing *differently* from every one, then you are in that respect

correspondingly original. If you can do that one thing *better* than any one else, then you are, to that extent, a genius. Carlyle wrote differently from all men, and, to my thinking, better than most of them, and accordingly I call him original and a genius. His originality consists not so much in the subjects he chose to write on as in the manner in which he treated them. It is not so much what he writes about as *how* he writes. His peculiarity and his greatness lie in his style. No little words drop from his pen; nothing he writes is mean or petty; he has the power—and he uses it—of putting a semblance, nay, a reality, of greatness, into everything of which he talks. What would be trash and twaddle in the hands of most, and weak and puerile in the hands of all men else, is rendered strong and dignified at his touch. He writes grandly of common—even of comical—things. What would be to us a pitiable weakness to be smiled at, and then kindly covered up, is to him text for a glorious sermon. He is ever preaching greatness out of littlenesses. He has seen that all life is a vast, mighty parable, and his writings are his attempt at its interpretation; the multi-

tudinous, infinite analogies that traverse all creation have caught his eye, fired his heart, and touched his pen. Back of all shams and mockeries—by them, through them—he has found the everlasting verities; the world has shown him an universe; time has taught him eternity. Nothing to him was common or unclean; all was grand and noble, because all had meaning, all could teach. It has been suggested that Carlyle's message to the world was—valuable it may be—but brief, and easily to be got at from the reading of his first few books. He has been accused of redundancy, of useless repetitions, of dreary harpings on one string, of writing on and on long after his message has been exhausted, merely to relieve his own personal spite, air his own idiosyncrasies, and indulge his love of fault-finding, carping, and cavilling. Such a charge—in so far as it is criminal—is not hard of refutation. Every line of Carlyle is not bran new, made of just discovered ore, and coined on the spot; but every line is genuine and has the true ring, and if the gold is not always altogether his own (as indeed it cannot be) it has at least been re-minted by him, and is stamped and superscribed with his individuality. What else is wanted of any writer? There are not many truths worth much—that is to say, there are not many truths at all (for all truth is worth much)—in the world. Cut down to the roots of all philosophies and systems of teaching whatsoever; hew down all that is only branch and leaf, all that is immaterial and merely adjunctive; get at the heart of them, and you find half-a-dozen truths that would feed the world for ever. Only they are not dainty morsels highly spiced and flavoured, but simple, wholesome, beef-steak sort of fare, and the world with its depraved appetite will not eat. Such truths Carlyle preached through a lifetime. He taught the everlasting rightness of truth, and the eternal wrong of a lie; that "obedience is our universal duty and destiny;" that "for man's well-being Faith is properly the one thing needful." "Love not pleasure, love God," he cried, "this is the everlasting Yea, wherein all contradictions are solved, wherein whoso walks and works it is well with him." These are some of the lessons Carlyle sought to teach. Is it any wonder that he urged them again and again? How else could he—or could any man—teach even the aptest pupils, let alone such loggerheads as live in this world, but by being repetitive, reiterative, emphatic? With such a message to declare would you have him shout once, and for ever after hold his peace? Furnished with such an anvil and such a hammer would you have him strike once, and then lay by his tools? He was compelled to "say on," hurling sentence after sentence he woke England, and made men and women—many of them—use

their almost forgotten prerogative and *think*, seriously, soberly and sincerely. But Carlyle did not weakly repeat himself as his detractors state. Let us look at ourselves for a moment; we who think and speak nothing but platitudes, are we not continually saying over and over again the same things, only all we say is so ordinary, so commonplace, that no one notices? But let a great man, whose almost every word is notable, chance to repeat a great thought, in substance only, and its very weight and worth is cause of its recognition, and straightway the world is down on him. Besides, it is the duty of every good man to be ever assaulting men with truth, to be thrusting at them with it. What else mean our ten thousand English pulpits? What are the multitudes of sermons preached every First Day but attempts to drive home the same few nails of truth with innumerable hammers of all makes, sizes, and shapes? All words whatsoever—written or spoken—worth anything at all, are either a declaration of truth or a searching for it. All else is useless bandage and wrappings—rubbish, lumbering the world and choking men's souls.

My readers may style all this irrelevant. Be that as it may, here is a more definite word. Carlyle's writings, like all writings, are a mixture of philosophy and history. Sometimes, as in the "French Revolution," he is a philosophic historian; sometimes, as in "Sartor Resartus," he is the historic philosopher—that the history is individual and not national does not matter. Much has been said of his method of writing history. If by history you mean a mere threaded string of facts, then Carlyle is no historian at all. But if you mean by history a series of almost supernatural pictures, a vivid portrayal of crises of all kinds, a letting in of the light on the heart of men and of the world, a showing *how* men and nations live, a laying bare of the inner life of which ordinary history is but the shell, then the sage of Ecclefechan is the historian of the age, and, in some sense, of the world. One word more—a word of caution to young authors. Carlyle's style is fascinating, and is not difficult to imitate—after a fashion. Do not attempt such imitation, which nine times out of ten ends in dismal, yet ludicrous, failure. "Best be yourself, imperial, plain, and true," in literary style as in everything else. Don't try to be a Carlyle, but let Carlyle help you to be yourself. And if to some it may seem I am not quite practising what I teach, if to some keen noses there is in these lines a lingering flavour of the great man's style, believe that it was put there on purpose to act as a warning, and teach, by painful illustration, the bane of affection.

## THE HARMONIUM AND AMERICAN ORGAN AS MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

An ideal musical instrument would be one of beautiful tone, which could be sustained at pleasure; which would admit of the execution of all kinds of passages; permitting of all varieties of power, on successive notes, or exactly as desired; which would also permit of harmonies being employed as well as melodies in such a way that the harmonies do not overpower the melodies. It should be cheap, and, if portable, better still.

It will be seen at once that, although both the harmonium and American organ each possess some of these points, neither possess all. While the tone of the harmonium is characteristic when employed melodically, it is disagreeable even to harshness in very full chords. The American organ, on the other hand, if pleasant to the ear, is devoid of much character, and is very deficient in power of attack, and in that of passionate accentuation. Only the most flabby of phrasing is possible, and the "dynamics" are practically absent even under the hands of a first-rate performer, be the knee swells, etc., pumped ever so much. Still, its effect in chords is much better than that of the harmonium; for certain styles it is preferable.

The harmonium, to a master of the expression stop, affords the most delightful *nuances*, and in this respect, used melodically only, it is scarcely inferior to the violin. Shakes and repetitions, too, are quite possible, and such passages as scales and arpeggios can be "shaded" and brought out in a way impossible on an American organ, which is very deficient in "attack."

Suumed up, then, we may say that the harmonium shines most as a *melodic* instrument, and the American organ as a *harmonic* instrument, subject to further broad general principles. Each has, therefore, its own definite sphere of action and work; and in purchasing buyers should consider whether it is desired to possess an instrument for solo use, or for use in combination with others. For the latter purpose the harmonium is preferable; while if one's only object be to perform slow and solemn music in private the tone of the American organ will be probably chosen instead. In short, like persons and things in general, an assertive genius is apt to be disagreeable company alone, just as the sweet and *dulcet* in time becomes monotonous without company.

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AN eminent Scottish surgeon and professor at the University of Edinburgh was entirely devoted to his profession. A quaint incident in his practise will show this. The poet Tennyson had at one time consulted him about some affection of the lungs. Years afterwards he returned on the same errand. On being announced he was nettled to observe that Mr. Syme had neither any recollection of his face, nor, still more galling, acquaintance with his name. Tennyson thereupon mentioned the fact of his former visit. Still Syme failed to remember him. But when the professor put his ear to the poet's chest, and heard the peculiar sound which the old ailment had made chronic, he at once exclaimed—"Ah, I remember you now. I know you by your lung." Can you imagine a greater humiliation for a poet to be known, not by his lyre, but by his lung?

A STORY is told about Carlyle and Thackeray, which may be new to some readers. Several artists at the Royal Academy dinner, sitting in the neighbourhood of these great men, were expressing their enthusiasm about Titian. "His glorious colouring is a *fact* about Titian," said one; "and his glorious drawing is another *fact* about Titian," cried a second. So they went on, till Carlyle, who had been listening in silence to their

rhapsodies, interrupted them by saying with slow deliberation, which had its own impressive emphasis—"And here I sit, a man made in the image of God—who *know* nothing about Titian, and *care* nothing about Titian—and that's another fact about Titian." Thackeray was sipping claret at the moment. He paused, and bowed courteously to Carlyle. "Pardon me," he said, "that is not a fact about Titian. But it is a fact—and a lamentable fact—about Thomas Carlyle."

THE master of a negro boy finding him a child of much intelligence, often talked with him; but whenever he committed a fault gave him a note to carry to the overseer, in which he directed that the boy should be whipped. Finding that these notes ended so unpleasantly the boy asked his master why, at such times, and such times only, he was beaten so severely? The master told him that the paper *talked so-and-so* to the overseer because he was idle, or had done something wrong. Why, massa," said the boy; "I have never seen you work." "Not with my hands, 'tis true," replied the master; "but I work with my head." The next time the boy was sent with a note to the overseer he threw it away; and on his master asking what he had said: "Nothing at all, I did not go to him, having this time worked with my head too."

## MUSIC AND WHITECHAPEL BOYS.

Many people think that it requires an educated ear to enjoy good music. This may be so in some cases, but there is that in the build of a Whitechapel boy to which the classical in music appeals. He makes a better audience for Beethoven or Paderewski than a highly-polished West-End assembly. Whereas he has lost himself in the new world which the strange sounds have opened out to him, in the more fashionable quarter there will often be subdued conversation and criticism. Yet how often do the people who lay themselves out to cater for his musical enjoyment think that anything will do for the East End! If instrumental music—they advise something “tuney” and “showy”; if vocal, something “funny” and “frivolous.” Such people would be astonished if they were met by the request of an East-End lad for a “sinarter.” Yet this is not an unknown experience. A boy who will scream with laughter if told that his voice is an “alto,” and will probably when he is older become a “tenor,” will yet sit quiet for five or ten minutes at a stretch listening to the strains of Mendelssohn, or even that master in music—Beethoven.

What a tremendous civilising and refining power there is in music! Our County Council have done well in spending more on music in our parks. Might they not do better by spending still more for music in our streets? How many thousands there are who never have the opportunity to breathe the pure atmosphere of the parks, much less to hear the really fine music that is provided there by the Council’s bands! What a boon would music be to these benighted souls if brought to their doors! Are there not squares and dis-

used burial-grounds, where permission to erect band-stands could readily be obtained?

The highest forms of literature have been placed under the very noses of the people by the Free Library movement, and priceless gems of books have been thereby thrust into their very hands. Why is the sister art not taking her place alongside? What more beneficent and humanising work could you do, O most worthy and much-maligned Fathers of the people! than by introducing into their midst those sounds which “soothe the savage breast,” and quiet the quarrelsome tongue, and make the wretched forget their misery. This should not be left to private, or even to religious, enterprise. Some of the most mournful and saddening results have issued therefrom.

From the asthmatic church organ to the meandering German street-musician, or the itinerant fiddler, there is much in them that savours of Tophet to the soul of the true lover of music. Music cannot be rightly interpreted without much practice, and to obtain the services of practised musicians means the expenditure of money. To some minds, unbiased by any pronounced hatred of the human species, expenditure in this direction is not so wasteful as in some others—for instance, in the law system, prisons, and other present-day means of human improvement.

Meanwhile, the Whitechapel youth makes himself as lively as possible with the “mouth-organ” and the beating of tin cans—and an occasional drum-and-fife band—and, at holiday time, a concertina or two.

S. Y.

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**SOCIAL CHARACTER OF INDUSTRY.**—Industry is essentially social. No man can improve either himself or his neighbour without neighbourly help; and to better the world is to set the world to work together. Every useful invention has been carried out and perfected by the co-operation of many minds; or by the successive applications of varied genius to the same object, age after age. The mechanic must aid the philosopher, or he must stand still in his demonstrations; and the philosopher must aid the mechanic, or he will work and work without wisdom. The astronomer needs the telescope, and the chemist his material and apparatus. The sciences hang on the arts, and the arts on the sciences.

**OCCUPATION.**—Man must have occupation or be miserable. Toil is the price of sleep and appetite, of health and enjoyment. The very necessity which overcomes our natural sloth is a blessing. The whole world does not contain either a briar or thorn which nature could have spared. We are happier with the sterility which we can overcome by industry than we could have been with spontaneous plenty and unbounded profusion. The body and mind are improved by the toil that fatigues them. The toil is a thousand times rewarded by the pleasure which it bestows. Its enjoyments are peculiar. No wealth can purchase them, no indolence can taste them. They flow only from exertions which repay the labourer.

## FORAMINIFERA AND FIDDLE BOOKS

Is a "curious conjunction of epitaphs," but Mr. E. Heron-Allen "comprises within himself" a vast knowledge of both, and in his refined and elegant home in Northwick-terrace are to be found collections of the literature of the fiddle, and of these minute and mysterious denizens of the deep which are both unique in their way. In spite of his 35 years Mr. Heron-Allen combines with a vigorous and manly frame a face in which powerful intellectuality and careless boyishness seem to be striving for the mastery. Educated at Harrow, and trained to follow in the footsteps of his father, one of the leading solicitors of London, he is now senior partner of Allen and Sons, in Carlisle-street, Soho, where he is as indefatigable in his work as he is popular with his clients.

I found him on a recent Sunday morning, his eyes glued to a powerful microscope of his own designing—an elaboration of the Stevenson binocular, built by J. Swift—examining a tray of chalk, and picking out with skill the objects he sought as they came within the field of vision, smoking a huge meerschaum the while.

"I'm sorry to find you so deep in Foraminifera. I wanted you to talk fiddle books to me," said I.

"Oh, we can talk both," was the reply. "What do you want to know?"

"I want to know what you have done in connection with fiddles and fiddle books."

"Well, I began the fiddle when I was ten—at Elstree School. Studied with Pieniger, Schneider, and Gibson. They all chucked me because I couldn't or wouldn't practise."

"I've heard you play, and can form my own judgment. Now tell me something about your book on violin-making, which I see has just gone into a new edition."

"It is no new edition at all, only a reprint of the second; for the book was stereotyped in 1885. I found there was no English book on violin-making from which a fiddle could be made, and I set myself to write one. Then I thought it better to learn how first, so worked in Chanot's shop an hour every day, after leaving the office, for two years, and made two fiddles, and the books came out in 1884."

"No wonder the book is so successful," said I; "what are your other works on the subject?"

"I published the 'Ancestry of the Violin' in 1882; 'Hedges Against Chanot' in 1883. The big book, as I told you, in 1884, and the material for 'De Fidiculis' was accumulating and being arranged meanwhile."

"Tell me about 'De Fidiculis Bibliographia' which is now, I believe, nearly finished; how came you to begin the scheme?"

"I began collecting books on music in 1878. Finding the subject too big for my time and pocket I took to fiddle books only. I began 'De Fidiculis' February 14th, 1879, intending it to be a twenty-page pamphlet, and it thus formed in embryo an appendix to my 'Violin-making as it Was and Is.' In 'Fidiculis, Bibliographia' I attempt to give a catalogue *raisonné* of all books, pamphlets, magazine and newspaper articles, books, dictionary extracts, dramas, romances, poems, methods, instruction books, theoretical and scientific works relating to instruments of the violin family in private or public libraries or referred to in works on the subject."

"And how far have you carried out your scheme?"

"In Part I, I treat of books on the construction of the violin, biographical works, works on varnish, on the history of the violin, and theoretical works; Part II deals with book sections and extracts; Part III with periodical publications; Part IV, with *belles lettres*; Part V, methods and instructions; and Part VI, miscellanea. As fresh books have come within my ken I have had to make more than one supplement. But the whole will now be complete in twelve fasciculae."

"This is really a great achievement, on which you are to be congratulated. What can I say to the world about your treasures in the way of books on the violin?"

"Look around you; you will see 350 books on the violin, 1,300 books and articles relating to it—to say nothing of fiddles and other stringed instruments themselves—such as pictures, engravings, autographs of fiddlers, scores, etc., many of which I picked up when I was sent to Italy for the executive of the Inventions Exhibition. It is the largest collection in the world. Each book has been catalogued in 'De Fidiculis,' which contains also, by the way, a biographical dictionary of the authors of the books."

"You must have some rare specimens in such a collection?"

"Yes; my rarest are Hubert le Blanc 'Défense de la Basse de Viole,' Amsterdam, 1640; Rousseau, 'Traité de la Viole,' Paris, 1687, and Grotto, 'La Violina con la sua Risposta,' the earliest print on the instrument, printed in Brescia *circ.* 1550. (Violin first made in Brescia *circ.* 1550, by Gasparo (Bertalotti) de Salo and G. P. Maggini.)"

After this catechism we fell a-talking in a desultory fashion about all sorts of matters connected with the violin, in the course of which I gathered some of Mr. Heron-Allen's fiddle maxims, as he called them. He said old fiddles are a foolish fetish. Collectors had much better collect

those of the best modern makers. Hill, Chanot, Gand, and Bernardel make quite as well as Stradivari, and much better than Guarneri, and after ten years' work they sound every bit as well. Several great artists carry about a Stradivari, but always *play* upon fiddles made by men now living, and the audience *hears* Stradivari because it is told to.

"The old Cremona varnish was not a patch on the varnish put on their fiddles by the finest modern makers."

"Tell me something about those Foraminifera on which I see you have been busy all the while."

"Certainly; I was started on them by a bottle of shore sand given me by Griffiths, the science master at Harrow, when I was fifteen. I have some mounts from it now; they are all labelled 'Foraminifera,' but there isn't one in the lot. They are corals and calcareous algae and shell débris, etc. When I left Harrow in 1878 I bought a lot of

foraminiferal sand from Russell, the geologist, and made a lot of symmetrically arranged slides. These are principally the commonest forams, but a lot of ostracodes and other minute shells are in them. Then I joined the Quekett Microscopical Club, and began working at recent forams. Then came an interval of three years' travelling and lecturing in America, writing fiddle books, novels, &c., and I did not return to Foraminifera again till I married. Then I began again, as a relief from law, with recent forams, with the help of Elcock, of Belfast, became F.R.M.S. and F.L.S. (Royal Microscopical and Linnaean)."

With this my time and Mr. Heron-Allen's patience under cross-examination were both exhausted, and we parted under promise that he would tell me on another occasion some of his experiences in America and his views on chiromancy, another subject to which he has given much attention.

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#### THE GIRL WHO PLAYS THE PIANO.

Most people can tell this young lady by the manner in which she sits when no one is speaking to her. She appears to be lost in meditation; her fingers move on her knees as on a piano; her head is thrown back, and her eyes are half closed. It appears to take some time to arouse her from this apparent coma, but in reality she is wide-awake to what is going on around her, and is closely watching the effect on her neighbours.

She requires to be much pressed before she will consent to play, and after she has consented much preparation is necessary before she can delight her

audience. The stool is too high, or too low; too far from, or too near, the piano. The top of the instrument has to be put open, which, in the case of a cottage piano, covered with photographs, draped flower-pots, books, and every other conceivable thing, except music, with which people adorn the tops of their instruments, is a work likely to occupy some considerable time, as every-one in the room has to be asked to move to admit of the various articles being stowed away under their chairs, on or behind tables, etc. At last, however, the performance begins, and then—Bedlam takes a back seat.

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ALL philosophy lies in two words—"sustain" and "abstain."

DOGMATISM.—The most confident assumption of uncertainty is often united with the most slender grounds of assurance. Dogmatism is seldom found to follow close thought and accurate knowledge; it is much oftener the outcome of mental indolence and superficiality. But truth and humility are sworn friends, and he who is well qualified to affirm will generally do so with the most modesty.

FREDERICK THE GREAT once found his page sleeping, and, on going to awaken him, saw a written paper hanging out of his pocket. The king drew it out, and found it to be a letter from

the page's mother, thanking her son for sending her part of his wages, and urging him to be a faithful servant. The king replaced the letter, and also slipped a rouleau of ducats into the page's pocket. Soon after he rang his bell and awoke the page. "Surely you have been asleep," said the king. The boy stammered part of an excuse and part of a confession, and, putting his hand into his pocket, found the roll of ducats. He drew it out, pale and trembling, but unable to speak. "What is the matter?" said the king. "Alas! your majesty," said the page, falling on his knees; "my ruin is intended; I know nothing of this money." "Why," said the king, "whenever fortune does come, she comes sleeping; you may send it to your mother with my good wishes, and assure her I will provide for you both."

## MUSICAL PRIZE COMPETITION FOR CHILDREN.

SEE PAGE 108.



A MUSICAL MAGAZINE FOR EVERYBODY.

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All Local Notes, Advertisements, &amp;c., to be sent to the Local Publishers.

All other Communications should be addressed to—

*The Editors, "The Minim,"  
84 Newgate Street,  
London, E.C.*

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THE prevalent stagnation in trade, and the epidemic of influenza is affecting music as well as many other phases of modern life. Concerts are being sparsely attended, and the shelves of the various music warehouses are getting thick with dust through neglect. The much-wanted tuning of the piano is left over by the careful house-wife until "times mend," which date is most earnestly prayed for by the long-suffering next-door occupants—especially upon those occasions deemed suitable by the aspiring Liszs for the assiduous practice of the favourite "Octave Study." And is it fancy only, or are there really fewer organ-grinders about than one is used to see, and does the scarcity of money lessen the supply of this class of professional musician? We are sorry if it is so—we have a strong affection for the street organist and his instrument. He is abused so much. Should we not, perhaps, mix a grain of pity with the anathema. Fancy grinding out a selection of Intermezzos, "Tommy Atkinses," "Lost Chords" and "Dandy Coloured Coons"—not once, but dozens of times in a day, and not one day only, but for weeks at a stretch. A sample of each melody tires *you* sometimes. *You*, we say, but there are some to whom the music brings thoughts of rest and recreation instead of weariness. Don't you like to see your domestic servant lean out of the top-floor window in the midst of her work, and become lost in thought of that better land, conjured up, perhaps, by only a "commonplace melody?" And so, for her sake, we hope to see trade wake up and our suburban streets filled again with jolly organ-grinders, telling us of the day when work will be done, and peace and everlasting music shall reign.

————— \* \* \* \* —————

IT is only by labour that thought can be made | be made happy; and the two cannot be separated healthy, and only by thought that labour can | with impunity.

## TURNING WEDDING-GIFTS INTO CASH.

## A BOON TO HARD-UP COUPLES.

There are few more perplexing questions propounded to persons moving in good society on the occasion of a fashionable marriage than "What shall we give as a wedding-present?" and, as the number of these testimonies to the popularity of the bride and bridegroom very frequently reaches the respectable total of four, five, and even six hundred, it may be easily believed that duplicates of the same article are often included in the collection, and instances where fac-similes are four or five times repeated are by no means rare.

But, although we can easily comprehend this, the fact will perhaps be hardly so readily accepted that a regular trade exists in the purchase of duplicate wedding-presents.

"A GENTLEMAN, temporarily pecuniarily embarrassed, is forced to offer his magnificent cabinet of table cutlery for sale. Price 15 guineas."

So ran the advertisement, the chance perusal of which brought the writer into communication with the person who had inserted it in the paper, and led to a visit being paid to his house, which was discovered to be more liberally stocked with plated and silver articles of all sorts than is many a shop.

"You are quite right," confessed the "gentleman temporarily pecuniarily embarrassed," after a short chat had established a feeling of confidence, "the advertisement is only a dodge to get rid of the goods, every article of which, I assure you upon my honour, is very well worth the figure asked.

"How did I come by my stock? Wedding-presents—every item; but presents that, being made in duplicate, the possessors are delighted to turn into cash.

"You see, at one time I was a servant in a big house myself, and frequently noticed how perhaps half-a-dozen of one article figured amongst the presents at a fashionable wedding. One day my

master got married himself, and, amongst other things, had four cigarette boxes given him as presents.

"Hang it all, John," said he, "why need they have given me so many?"

"Seeing he was annoyed—"If you'll let me try," says I, "I think I can get rid of one or two of them;" and two days after I handed him ten pounds in cash, after deducting a bit myself.

"That opened my eyes to the fact that there was business to be done in this line, and, knowing a great number of servants at various houses, I managed to keep myself well posted from day to day in all the latest news concerning fashionable weddings.

"Sometimes my advances are indignantly repelled by people to whom presents, whether in duplicate or not, are looked upon as sacred things never to be parted with; but more often my enterprise is rewarded, and, even if unsuccessful at the first application—usually made a month or so after the end of the honeymoon—I have had cases without number where a husband or wife, finding themselves somewhat hard-up, turn to their duplicate wedding-presents with joy as an easy means of 'raising the wind.'

"Mind you, it is a business that requires conducting with care. Note the careful selection of words displayed upon my little card—

"Ladies and gentlemen possessed of duplicate wedding gifts, and desirous of exchanging same for articles they do not possess, can have selections of goods sent to them on approval; or, if wishing to purchase some other article themselves, the very utmost value in cash will be given. Absolute secrecy is necessarily the very essence of all such transactions."

"Of course, they always do purchase other presents for themselves out of the money obtained by the sale of the old! Perhaps!"—*Cassell's Saturday Journal*.

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## GEMS FROM THE SCHOOLROOM.

Miss A. C. Graham, of Anerley, has received a prize from the "University Correspondent" for the best collection of schoolboy "howlers," and they are printed in a recent number of that periodical. In an accompanying letter Miss Graham says:—"When I learned one day the remarkable fact that 'Ilaied' and 'Odessae' translated Euripides, I felt that the time had come for action; I was seized with a burning desire to share with others

my joy in these facts; and as a means of spreading the 'New Learning,' I began to collect from examination papers and answers in class whatever would throw new light on old subjects. I have been some years at it now, and have pleasure in sending you the subjoined twelve extracts from my 'gems.' They are all *bond fide* answers, the spelling and punctuation being unchanged; in most cases I have still the original documents from

which they are taken." Among "selected specimens" from Miss Graham and others, given by our contemporary, are the following:—

**DIVINITY.**—Esau was a man who wrote fables and who sold the copyright to a publisher for a bottle of potash.—Explain the difference between the religious beliefs of the Jews and Samaritans. The Jews believed in the Synagogue and had their Sunday on a Saturday, but the Samaritans believed in the Church of England and worshipped in groves of oak; therefore the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. Titus was a Roman Emperor—supposed to have written the "Epistle to the Hebrews"; his other name was Oates.

**ENGLISH HISTORY.**—Oliver Cromwell was a man who was put into prison for his interference in Ireland. When he was in prison he wrote "The Pilgrim's Progress," and married a lady called Mrs. O'Shea.—Wolsey was a famous general who fought in the Crimean War, and who, after being decapitated several times, said to Cromwell, "Ah! if I had only served you as you have served me, I would not have been deserted in my old age."—Wesley was the founder of the Wesleyan Chapel, who was afterwards called Lord Wellington; a monument was erected to him in Hyde Park, but it has been taken down lately.—Who was Henry III? A zealous supporter of the Church, and died a Dissenter.—What is Divine Right? The liberty to do what you like in Church.—What is a Papal Bull? A sort of cow, only larger and does not give milk.—Perkin Warbeck raised a rebellion in the reign of Henry III. He said he was the son of a prince, but he was really the son of respectable people.

**DEFINITIONS.**—*Phænicians*—The inventors of Phænician blinds. *Bacchanal*—A native of Bechuana, in South Africa. *Chimaera*—A thing used to take likenesses with. *Watershed*—A place in which boats are stored during winter. *Gender*—Is the way whereby we tell what sex a man is. *Cynical*—A cynical lump of sugar is one pointed at the top. *Immaculate*—State of those who have passed the entrance examination at London University. *Hydrostatics*—Is when a mad dog bites you. It is called *hydrophobia* when a dog is mad and *hydrostatics* when a man catches it.

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.**—Keats wrote a savage criticism on *Endymion*, which brought on consumption.—The sonnet is a thing that has in its first four lines two meteors (quartan) and in the last six two meteors (turzette).—Latin of the 4th period was introduced into the language at the invention of Christianity 597 A.D., when the nobility and gentry spoke Latin-French and the Danes settled the throne for nearly 30 years.—Hamlet was very weak-minded. *Fond* of study. But was too weak to fulfil his duty which the Ghost had told him. He was very good to his mother. He profains madness, he really only put it on but some people say he was mad. One day when he was fighting the King asked him if he would have something to drink & he had put poison in it & Hamlet said he would wait the Queen took it & then she falls down dead Hamlet immediately stabs his father & drinks the poison and dies.—What do you understand by the Augustan age in English Literature? We mean the time of Cædmon, who flourished and wrote "Comus" about the time that St. Augustine converted the people of Kent.

**MISCELLANEOUS.**—Briefly describe the heart, and its function or work.—The heart is a comical shaped bag. The heart is divided into several parts by a fleshy petition. These parts are called right artillery, left artillery, and so forth. The function of the heart is between the lungs. The work of the heart is to repair the different organs in about half a minute.—What is a volcano? A volcano is a very powerful rock.—What is the meaning of *mer de glace*? Mother of glass.—What are fossils? Fossils are those remains of plants and animals which keep best when left to themselves—What fossil remains do we find of fishes? In some rocks we find the fossil footprints of fishes.—What are the metamorphic rocks? Rocks that contain metaphors.—"What is the matter?" queried a teacher. "You seem rather uncomfortable there." "I've got the *interjection*, sir," was the unexpected reply.—Explain the words *fort* and *fortress*. A fort is a place to put men in, and a fortress a place to put women in.—What is a Republican? A Republican is a sinner mentioned in the Bible.—The two chief volcanoes in Europe? Sodom and Gomorrah.



THE first Napoleon ordered boxes to be fitted in all the churches of Paris, in which the virtuous poor, without their delicacy being wounded, could put notes expressive of their wants. These boxes were only opened by the higher clergy, who were sworn to secrecy; and the wants of the parties

were thus relieved without any of the humiliating circumstances of a public application.

THE Bank of England covers nearly three acres

VIRTUE produces beauty, vice deformity.

## PRIZE COMPETITION.—No. 14.

We, this month, offer a prize of HALF-A-GUINEA for the best paper sent us in answer to the following questions.

(1) Give dates of Mozart's

- (a) Birth,
- (b) Death;

and Gounod's

- (a) Birth,
- (b) Death.

(2) Say what you know about any two of the following:—

August Manns,  
Arthur Sullivan,  
Edward Lloyd,  
Sims Reeves,  
Adelina Patti.

(3) Who is the organist of

- (a) St. Paul's Cathedral?
- (b) Westminster Abbey?

(4) Give the composer of

“The Creation,”  
The “Kreutzer” Sonata,  
The “Unfinished” Symphony,  
“The Harmonious Blacksmith.”

*Note.*—Regard will be paid to neatness, etc., as well as correctness.

The following rules must be strictly adhered to:

(1) The competition is only open to children under the age of 14.

(2) Answers, which must be written on one side of the paper only, must reach us at our *London* office not later than first post on April 20th.

(3) Envelopes must be addressed

THE EDITOR,  
“The Minim,”  
84 Newgate Street,  
London,

and marked “Competition.”

(4) The attached coupon must be filled in by parent of competitor or some responsible person, and enclosed with answers. It must be clearly understood that any books dealing with music may be referred to, but parents or friends of the children are to give absolutely no advice as to the choice of books for such consultation, or any other help whatever; our object being to interest the younger readers of “The Minim” in searching out musical history for themselves.

(5) The Editor's decision must be taken as final.

(6) Competitors must write their names and addresses at the end of their papers.

## COUPON No. 14.

I hereby certify that the enclosed paper is the unaided work of.....  
who is aged.....next birthday.

Signature of.....  
Certifier.....

Relation to.....  
Competitor.....

Address.....  
.....

At the end of the last century a servant in Paris gained a prize of £1,500 in the lottery. Two hundred louis d'ors she handed to the parish priest for the relief of the most indigent and industrious poor in the district, accompanying the donation with this admirable remark. “Fortune could only have been kind to me in order that I might be kind to others.”

In the days of John, king of Atri, an ancient city of Abruzzo, there was a bell put up, which any one who had received an injury had to ring, when the

king assembled the wise men that justice should be done. After some time the rope was worn out, and a piece of wild vine was made use of to lengthen it. Now there was a knight of Atri whose charger had become old and unserviceable, so that to save himself expense in feeding he turned the horse loose on the common. Driven by hunger the horse munched the vine and the bell rang; thereupon the judges assembled, and decreed that the knight whom he had served in his youth should feed him in his old age; a sentence which the king confirmed under a heavy penalty.

## "IMPOSTORS, BORES, AND OTHER DISAGREEABLE PEOPLE."

Dean Hole, of Rochester, lecturing in America on this subject, remarked :—"I do not know much about American bores, as I have not met any here as yet. But we have a large supply in Europe. They are the mosquitoes and gnats of society, and must be treated as such. Oh, the bores ! I would as soon meet a buffalo in a blizzard as one of them. There is the bore who talks to you about family quarrels, about his mother-in-law, or some other subject in which you are equally uninterested. One of them wrote to me some time ago stating that he had heard that many years ago the Danes stretched the skins of their dead on the cathedral doors, and asked for some information on the subject. I replied that I was too much occupied with the bodies and souls of Christians to give much thought to the epidermis of the early Danes. Another wrote to me that a man in Rochester owed him money, and whether I could not collect it for him. I replied that I was a dean, not a dun. Among the variety of bores is the man who has nothing to do and won't let you do anything if he can help it. I recall the story of a sultan who had a very pompous vizier, and, desiring to rid himself of the vizier, sold him in open market for a slave. The market was not brisk that day, and the vizier brought only 8d. The sultan bought him in at this price, and thereafter, whenever the vizier became pompous, the sultan had only to mention 8d., or draw the figure 8 in the air, when the pompous minister immediately subsided. Then there is the bore who is always groaning about his health. I recall a story told by the elder Grossmith, who, on inquiring of one of the bores about his health, was met with the reply, 'Between three and four o'clock this morning I was at death's door.' 'At death's door !' replied Grossmith ; 'well, why didn't you go in ?' Then there is the bore who introduces the lecturer and who first fires off all my fireworks and lets me follow. And the bore who cuts your magazine with his finger. There is also the bore who writes you letters. He usually wants an autograph or something of that kind, and tells you that he numbers among his col-

lection the names of Sir Walter Scott and Tom Cribb, the champion of the prize ring, and others. The stout man or woman who plants himself or herself in a doorway and won't let you pass is another of this class. I remember the story of a very stout lady who was riding on the railway, and inquired of a gentleman who was seated next to her if the next station was not Sloane Street. Being told that it was, the lady asked the gentleman to assist her to alight when the station was reached. 'I have been riding around London twice,' said she, 'and would like to get off this time.' When asked how this had happened she said, 'Well, you see that I am very stout, and I am also very awkward ; so much so, in fact, that I am compelled to get off backward. Every time I attempted this a guard would give me a push back, and before I could explain the train started off.' Among the impostors there are some very amusing and some certainly clever. One of these recently went into a prominent jewellery store in London and asked the price of some of the most costly diamonds. While he was handling them an employé, who was so concealed as to be able to see all that was going on without being seen himself, noticed that the supposed customer had slipped four of the most valuable diamonds into his pocket. A policeman entered at this moment, and the man was given in charge. He was told to be careful, as the man had the stolen property, and this would be undoubtedly evidence. The policeman handcuffed his prisoner, and both started in a cab for Scotland Yard. The next day, when the jeweller appeared to prosecute, neither policeman nor prisoner were to be seen. The supposed policeman and the jewellery thief were confederates. Among all the impostors, one of the worst is the man who wants to appear to be something that he is not. Among these—I say it in all kindness—is the woman who wants to appear mannish. She uses his shirts, collars, and cigarettes, and in other ways plays the man. To these I would say that a woman never looks so beautiful as when she appears as God intended her to appear—in her womanliness and gentleness."



On the occasion of the infamous massacre of St. Bartholomew's many of the governors of provinces refused to execute the order to destroy all Protestants. One noble viscount had the courage to write to Charles IX that he found many good soldiers in his garrison, but not one executioner ; and begged him to command their lives in any other service.

IN the rebellion of 1745 a large subscription was raised in support of the Government. The Duke of Grafton, congratulating his royal master, George II, on such a proof of the affections of his subjects, his majesty replied in his broken English, "My good lord, my peoples be my wife ; though they quarrel with me themselves they will not suffer others to do it . . ."

## JOTTINGS FROM THE EDITOR'S NOTE BOOK.

In turning over some dusty volumes in a local library we came across some letters written by the Rev. Charles Simeon upon the question of church music, dated more than a century ago, and addressed to the musical rector of Aldwinkle, the Rev. Thomas Haweis. Space forbids our quoting the letters *in extenso*, even if privileged to do so, but they may briefly be summarized as follows:—The old evangelical divine had been so impressed with the singing and music generally at Aldwinkle, that he was determined to “leave no stone unturned in order to accomplish something of the kind” at his own church. To this end he announced his intention of “procuring a barrel-organ, capable of playing sixty tunes,” and of printing those tunes adapted to the collection of psalms and hymns used by his congregation. In order to secure every chance of success at the outset he begged for copies of “a few of the sweetest and most select tunes” in use at Aldwinkle.

Unfortunately the answer to this letter does not appear, but it is evident, from the old divine's second letter, that the rector had thrown out the suggestion that it might be possible to accomplish the desired end without the introduction of a barrel-organ at all, and probably referred to effects produced in his own church (such as *pianos*, *crecendos*, *pauses*, and the like), by the use of stringed instruments for the accompaniments, which, considering that the church was in those days noted for its musical service, must have been far more to the rector's taste than a mechanical contrivance.

However, “Old Simeon” replies, thanking him for his kind suggestions, and plaintively remarks:—“I have been for many years exerting myself, not only in the way you propose, but in various other ways, to attain my end, but in vain. Persons whom I employed left me; my people are not musically inclined; those who had learned to sing at my expense went away, etc., etc.” (things have not altered a great deal during the past hundred years!), and he states his decision to purchase two barrel-organs—one for church, and the other for purposes of rehearsal.

With reference to expression, *nuances*, etc., he says: “What you suggest about pianos, pauses, etc., can all be accomplished this way (*i.e.*, by barrel-organ) to higher perfection than any except the very first musicians can execute, and it will be all under my direction.”

So far good, if the Rev. Charles is as accomplished a musician as his friend at Aldwinkle; but in the next few lines he admits this is not so by saying: “I have not, indeed, any scientific acquaintance with music, nor any taste to boast of,

but, perhaps, sufficient for this purpose. I intend having a barrel for the purpose of teaching, so that I myself, ignorant as I am, shall be able to teach as well as if I were a professional man.”

With what success his well-meant efforts met, is, unhappily, not recorded; but to us in this year of grace 1895, the idea of giving proper effects to “pianos and pauses” on a barrel-organ in a manner at all approaching that obtainable from a stringed quartet is indeed delicious. At the same time, all must admit that the old divine was unmistakably thorough in his endeavours to improve and beautify the services at his church, limited though the means at his disposal were, and all credit is due to him on that account. Can the same be generally said of present-day clergy? In a great measure, “Yes,” but instances could be quoted where, notwithstanding the enormous resources—both of science and culture—available at the very door, the service of the House of God is not conducted even “decently and in order.”

Walking down Regent Street recently, we turned into a house a few doors from Conduit Street, and spent a very pleasant, not to say instructive, half-hour with the courteous manager of the “Æolian” Exhibit. For the benefit of those amongst our readers who have not seen or heard the instrument, we may briefly say that it is practically a first-class American organ with an attachment whereby music can be played without any use being made of the keyboard. A panel is removed from the front of the case, a “roll,” on which the music is punched out in holes or oblongs, is inserted, the performer starts the mechanism, and *hey presto!* one can play practically anything from a symphony to a waltz, giving proper effect to time and tone colour by judicious manipulation of the various stops.

Its capabilities are really marvellous when the player (?) has mastered the few technical details that must be overcome; a movement from Gounod's “Faust” ballet music, a Gung! waltz, and a Wagner excerpt, were all reeled off with an astonishingly good resemblance to the orchestral rendering.

Now this is doubtless one of the best examples of the proficiency to which mechanical music-making art has attained, but it has taken years to accomplish.

Nearly fifty years ago the late Charles Dickens described his experiences of the “Autophon” at the Exhibition of '51, and from his description it must have borne some such relation to the “Æolian” as the first-launched screw steamer did to the P. & O. liner “Caledonia.” Let us quote his own in-

imitable language:—"The instrument was something in shape between a cabinet pianoforte and a church organ. The exhibiter was wont to take a sheet of perforated cardboard, insert one end of it between two rollers and then turn a handle. A tune resulted, somewhat lugubrious it is true, but still a tune, and evidently produced with the aid of this perforated cardboard . . . . This cardboard is perforated by some kind of punching machine; the holes appear irregular, but are systematic in respect for the purpose intended. All holes are cut in rank and file—ranks for notes heard together in harmony and files for notes heard consecutively in the progress of the tune . . . . The perforations, as they arrive at particular spots, allow wind to pass into the pipes, whereas the unperforated part acts as a barrier through which the wind cannot penetrate. The power of change (of tune) is illimitable; a few pence will pay for a sheet of perforated cardboard, and indifferent music is to be had at sixpence or eightpence a yard. We do not say that if you were to apply for a couple of feet of "Adeste Fideles," or a yard and a quarter of "Sicilian Mariner," that they would be sold in precisely those lengths, but there is no reason why ten thousand tunes should not be played on this identical grinding organ. The pianoforte can also produce music by the yard. The *piano-mécanique* by M. Debain, of Paris, is a sort of cottage piano, and no one need know there is any peculiar *mécanique* about it at all. But the player may bring forth several odd-looking yards of music and transform himself at once from an intellectual player to a mere music-grinder." After describing the mechanism he proceeds:—

"A player becomes a commander of Rossini or

any other musical luminary at once. He puts *Una voce* into a box, and grinds it out again brand new and uncurtailed. Where the music is of great length the grinder puts in one board after another and pieces them together. If, however, he does not place them exactly end to end there will be a hole in the ballad!"

He then quotes M. Debain's advertisement, which, though some forty odd years old, has a wonderful ring of truth to-day:—

"Although music at the present day forms a portion of regular education, it is certain the absorption of time in more serious pursuits, and the want of disposition for study is such, that in a hundred familiès we can scarcely find ten individuals who can play music. Among this number some only can play the organ or the pianoforte, but without being able to master the finer compositions." Dickens then continues:—

"For such families the *piano-mécanique* is intended, and M. Debain tells us also at how much per yard he will supply music. Thus, a plank of polka costs about four shillings, consequently the overture to *Gazza Ladra* or *Semiramide* would cost very much more, but the grand overture would be just as easy to grind out as a simple polka . . . . When, therefore, the compiler of weights and measures next sets about his labours, let him remember that among the commodities sold by the barrel or by the yard, is music!" (The allusion to a barrel is with reference to another mechanical instrument on which we have not touched).

Truly we are constantly brought face to face with the fact that "there is nothing new under the sun."



THE last words of Charles V of France are memorable for the noble moral which they contain. "I have arrived at justice, but what king can be certain that he has always followed it? Perhaps I have done much evil of which I am ignorant. Frenchmen, who now hear me, I address myself to the Supreme Being and to you. I find kings are happy but in this—that they have the power of doing good."

THE nationality of that land in which a composer is born and bred will, in my opinion always be recognised in his creation. He may live in another land, and write in another language—as evidence Handel, Gluck, Mozart and others. There is, however, a reflected national creation (very much in vogue in our day); this, although very interesting,

cannot, in my estimation, command the sympathy of the united world; awakens an ethnographic interest at most. A melody that would charm tears from a Finlander would fall quite coldly upon a Spaniard; a dance-rhythm that would compel a Hungarian to hop and spring would not disturb the repose of an Italian, etc. It is true that the dance-rhythm of one nation may be so grafted upon another that it finally accustoms itself to it—yes, even enjoys it (as, for instance, the waltz has become universal); but of complete unity of feeling, of the same enthusiasm in their melody and dances, two nations can never be. The composers of the reflective-national style must rest satisfied with the acknowledgment (often adoration) of their own country, which is not to be undervalued, as it probably has also its high worth and great satisfaction.  
—Anton Rubinstein.

## THE PRANKS OF OPERA-SINGERS.

Marshall Saxe said he would rather command an army of 100,000 men than attempt to direct an opera corps. That his choice was a wise one is suggested by an entertaining article in the *Cornhill*, entitled "The Prima Donna," but dealing impartially with the whims of male and female singers.

## HOW RONCONI GAVE HIMSELF AWAY.

Here is a tale of how a manager once proved too sharp for a suspiciously indisposed artiste:—

"Ronconi, when in London, had an inconvenient habit of saying he was ill whenever he found that his wife had not been cast to sing with him. One afternoon he sent word that he was afflicted with an *abassamento di voce*. It was near the time of performance, and the manager was at his wits' end about a deputy. Thinking, however, there might be some deception about the matter, he set off for the singer's house, taking his own physician with him. Ronconi expressed his regrets in a hollow whisper. But Ronconi's powers as an actor were not unknown to the manager, and he naturally doubted the reality of the whispering performance. However, affecting to be its dupe, he proceeded to talk about something which he knew would be of unusual interest to the supposed invalid. In a moment Ronconi warmed up; the feigned voice was forgotten, and the wonted

tones burst forth in the animation of the discourse. Caught in the fact, the shamming vocalist ascribed his marvellous recovery to the mere presence of the doctor. He sang that night, and never sang better."

## THE PRIMA DONNA AND THE FIELD-MARSHALS.

With reference to the high fees paid to star singers, there are some people who think that these sums are out of all proportion to the artistic value of the singer. Such was the opinion of the Empress of Russia, when Gabrielli asked five thousand ducats to sing at a State concert. "Why," said the Queen, "that is more than I pay to my field-marshals." "Then let your field-marshals sing for you," was the reply.

## "YOU SEE DIS?"

The article is full of amusing tales of this kind. Here is one about Catalini, who had a great weakness for showing off her jewellery:—

"You see dis brooch?" she would say. "De Emperor of Austria gave me dis. You see dese earrings? De Emperor of Russia gave me dese. You see dis ring? De Emperor Napoleon gave me dis;" and so on. Braham, the eminent tenor, in imitation of this, would say, pointing to his umbrella, "You see dis? De Emperor of China gave me dis." Then pointing to his teeth, "De Emperor of Tuscany gave me dese."

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